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## LAW SCHOOLS TEACH PUPILS TO ANALYZE

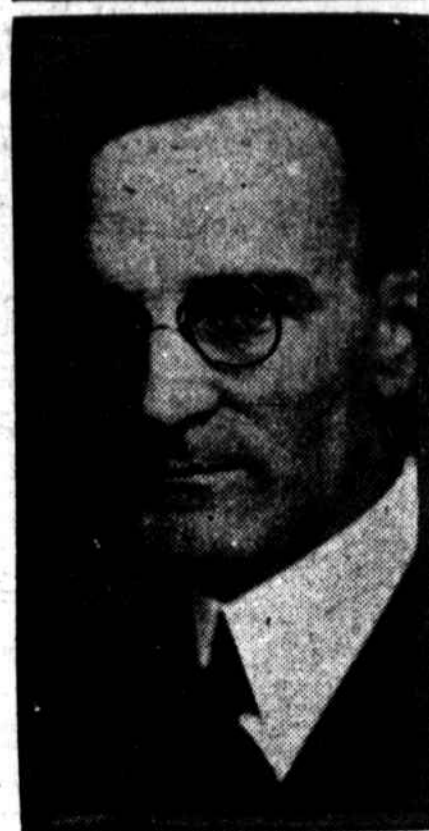
University Classes Provide Op-  
portunity for Wage Earners  
to Become Learned.

By MERTON L. FERNON,  
Dean of George Washington Uni-  
versity Law School.

A doctrine peculiar to the English law, known as "Judicial Precedent," gives to that law much of its character and is responsible for most of the literature with which a law student must deal. That doctrine, briefly and roughly stated, is that when a controversy has been judicially decided, the decision is not only binding on the parties of the litigation, but is a precedent to be followed in deciding like cases in the future. The decision recognizes or establishes a rule of law. The adjudicated case is, therefore, of permanent interest. Provision must be made for reporting it in a manner that will clearly indicate just what was decided. The doctrine of "Judicial Precedent" thus accounts for the character, and a great part of the bulk of literature, which confronts a law student.

The mass of adjudicated cases has been accumulating for centuries, and

## SCHOOL HEAD



ROY C. CLAFLIN.

at times its great volume has caused alarm. Lord Coke lamented in the seventeenth century, that legal literature had grown so large. In the preface to one of his reports, he enumerated the volumes it embraced and then exclaimed: "Thus, you have fifteen books of treatises and as many volumes of reports." Although Lord Coke felt swamped by the thirty volumes of law books then extant, his disciples of this day must confront thirty thousand and more. The great bulk of legal literature is still increasing. In the United States alone, 20,000 opinions containing 40,000,000 words are produced each year by appellate courts.

### Important Cases Linked.

Our legal literature, however, is not so appalling as a mere statement of its bulk might indicate. Obviously, no man can hope to even read all the adjudicated cases in English law. But this is not necessary, since a comprehensive understanding of English law may be derived from the study of a comparatively few cases. These cases do not stand isolated one from the other. Great principles thread them together. As iron filings line up under the influence of a magnet, so these myriad of cases cling along and delineate the general principles which produce them.

A large part of a law student's work is to study typical cases and in them to observe and delimit the general principle. The variety of cases is, of course, as great as the realm of human relations. The main principle is usually obscured by irrelevant details, and frequently it is not expressed. The study of these cases, therefore, is an excellent discipline in developing power of comprehension and in teaching one to discriminate between the essential and the non-essential. This mental habit is valuable to anyone, and essential to the lawyer.

A common error on the part of beginning law students is to read too much and study too little. The reading of many cases without taking time to grasp their significance soon causes mental indigestion. Each case needs to be studied in its relation to others. The modern law teacher with his students in the class room analyzes each case. Student and teacher together, disclose the principles those cases embody. The course of later decisions modifying that principle is traced.

### Teaching Methods Changed.

The law schools of today are playing a much more important part in legal education than they did fifty years ago. The old law school was looked upon and operated merely as a method of imparting information. It is now realized that that was but a small service. However eminent its lectures, the majority of them imparted but little information which could not be found more clearly stated in print. Particularly useless were the definitions, maxims and high sounding phrases drilled into students only to be repeated back by rote, unassimilated. The chief aims of the modern law school is to develop the student's legal understanding and to throw into bold relief the fundamental principles that run through the law.

A student lays the foundation for his professional career in the law school and cannot do that work too thoroughly. If he neglects to assimilate the great principles of law, he will always labor under a handicap. No inspiration or herculean effort will enable the mediocre, half-prepared lawyer to arise to the emergency of being fitted against a thorough and capable lawyer in a difficult case. While there is an insistent demand for able, well-trained lawyers, the profession has but little to offer one who is not able to arise above mediocrity.

As actual business experience is part of the curriculum, particular attention is paid to the task of finding such work for the students and of giving to the boys the tasks which they are best able to perform or for which they have shown a natural aptitude. As a result, the school is a clearing house for the needs of employers for extra help, especially on Saturdays and in vacation time. Practically all of the students were employed in this way during the Christmas holidays, and their work was carefully checked by the faculty.

The school has now completed its first half year. The success which its students have found in their contact with business and the testimonials of the employers who have given them places on their payrolls is eminent assurance of the future of the school and of its students.

## COLUMBIA SCHOOL FINDS DRAFTSMEN IN DEMAND

Roy C. Claflin, president of the Columbia School of Drafting, recently interviewed at his office by a representative of the Educational Bureau of The Washington Times, stated that one of the surest indications of a general revival of business is the increased number of calls for draftsmen being received by him from industrial concerns. Many manufacturers write that they expect to resume operations this fall and that they will need to considerably increase their drafting forces.

Mr. Claflin further stated that the reason why the graduates of the Columbia School of Drafting are sought after by manufacturers and other employers of draftsmen is because of their unusually practical and thorough training, which, while it can be mastered in from six to ten months of spare time, is the equivalent of at least several years' professional experience under a most exacting chief draftsman.

## COLONIAL DAMES ERECT SPOTSWOOD MEMORIAL

RICHMOND, Va., Sept. 10.—The Colonial Dames of Virginia have placed a memorial on the spot where Alexander Spotswood, colonial governor of Virginia, and his Knights of the Horse Shoe caught the first view of Anglo-Saxons on the land beyond the mountains, known as the Shenandoah Valley. On the summit of Swift Run, September 5, 1716, Spotswood and his knights drank to the health of the king. The shaft commemorates this unique event.

The ceremonies opened with prayer and the monument then was presented to Governor Westmoreland Davis for the State of Virginia.

### Odd Fellows Banquet.

WINCHESTER, Va., Sept. 10.—Dr. W. S. Gregory, of Roanoke, grandmaster of Odd Fellows in Virginia, and five other Grand Lodge officers and members were honor guests at a banquet held by Madison Lodge, No. 6, here.

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